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SEC 2012 Annual Meeting



SEC Annual Meeting 2012

Circle your calendars for **June 8th and 9th**, the dates for the Annual Meeting of the Southeast Conference.



We will be hosted by First Congregational UCC, Birmingham, and we are honored to be able to welcome Holly MillerShank, the newly elected team leader of the MESA (The Ministerial Excellence Support and Authorization) Team of the United Church of Christ. Holly has been instrumental in the introduction of the new process of discernment for authorized ministry in the UCC. The focus of our meeting will be **"Building Ministry for the 21st Century United Church of Christ"**. There will be a civil rights tour, a TAP commencement, a convocation on Friday afternoon, and much more! Watch this web site and your inbox for more details and registration information coming soon!



Southeast Conference FAQ's

[Who is the SEC?](#)
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Conference News - April 2012

Mission Trips that Matter



Are you looking for a mission trip opportunity for your congregation?

Here is an invitation for a work camp mission trip.

Where: Pleasant Hill, TN, on the beautiful Cumberland Plateau in mid east Tennessee.

Overview: Neighbors Together, a local grass roots organization serving basic needs of individuals and

families in the area, is in need of work groups to help us renovate a small old house recently acquired for office space. Uplands Retirement Village, a UCC supported retirement village with residents from all over the country, and Pleasant Hill Community United Church of Christ, a just peace, whole earth, open and affirming

congregation, will provide additional work sites and support for volunteers.

Available work camp dates: May, June, and early July

Age preference: high school - adult

Length of work camp: Groups are welcome to come for several days to a week.

[Click here to learn more about Neighbors Together](#)

Missionaries Available to Visit Your Local Congregation



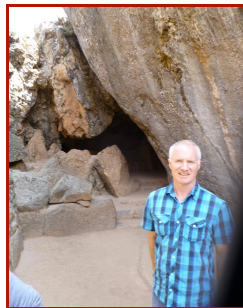
We are pleased to announce that Maryjane and Don Westra, Global Ministry missionaries serving in Zimbabwe will be available to visit your church for to speak at worship or to groups interested in the global ministries of the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). they will be available during the month of October. Don and Maryjane are completing a three-year term of service with the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe. Don serves as staff to the Micro-Enterprise and Strategic Planning/Management Program at Mt. Selinda and Maryjane serves as a Hospital Administrator which includes administration responsibilities at the Daisy Dube Children's Home in Mt. Selinda.

We are also pleased to announce that Anil and Theresa Henry medical missionaries serving in Mungeli, India, will be available August 21 - September 14, 2012, Anil and Theresa are commissioned by the Alabama-Tennessee Associating for their work in India, and were members of Brookmeade Congregational UCC while they were in Nashville.



Please contact Tim Downs at tdowns@secucc.org or tdowns@secucc.org, if you are interested in making arrangements.

Writing the Sacred: A Journaling, Poetry & Psalm-writing Workshop



Presenter: Ray McGinnis

Date: Thursday, May 10, 2012

Workshop: 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. | Dinner: 6:00 p.m.

Location: Pilgrimage United Church of Christ
3755 Sandy Plains Road, Marietta 30066

Cost: \$15

To register call: 770-971-0007

Writing the Sacred: A Psalm-Writing workshop. As a veteran workshop leader, Ray McGinnis brings a splendid range of writing exercises to spark your imagination. At this workshop, come play with words, come nurture your spirit as you learn ways to make your own new psalms. Explore how Psalm writing can deepen self-understanding, expand self-expression, personal and spiritual growth. Ray offers a splendid range of Psalm excerpts along with other poets who have glimpsed the sacred in the ordinary through writing. Ray brings to this workshop simple step-by-step journal writing and poetry exercises to help you write a new psalm with ease. Come and explore the thin spaces where reflective writing and spirituality meet. This workshop is designed for both those who enjoy writing and those who have never put pen to paper. This is a workshop open to older children, youth and adults. Come and discover how God is still speaking.

Signed copies of Writing the Sacred will be available for sale during the workshop for those who wish to purchase a copy priced at \$20

"This was THE most spiritually honest, open-hearted, accessible workshop I think I have ever attended."

- The Rev. Linda Campbell, St. John's Episcopal Church, Ross, California

"Writing the Sacred is rich with insight, power and meaning. Ray McGinnis gives us a great gift by showing the Psalms to be a living language, a poetic language vital for today. These pages are permeated with our human story - our raw and beautiful longing for God...(and) acts as a healing balm and creative catalyst to help you reclaim your soul's voice." - John Fox, author, Poetic Medicine: The Healing Art of Poem-Making, Mountain View, California

"Have I told you how much I like your book? I just quoted your work to someone again yesterday and she's going to go buy it." – Christina Baldwin, author, Storycatcher, Whidbey Island, Washington

"Some of the people who were at this workshop today I have known for many years. Yet, I found myself starting new conversations, discovering sides of myself, new insights and appreciations of others who are apart of my church family... I come away with some fresh perspectives about myself and who I am in community that feels both surprising, expansive and affirming."

- Mary, Participant, Trinity Congregational Church, Gloucester, Massachusetts

Georgia-South Carolina Annual Meeting 2012



Georgia-South Carolina Association Holds Annual Meeting March 3rd, Hosted by our Newest Congregation

On Saturday, March 3rd, over forty people representing 11 churches gathered for the Annual Meeting of the Association at Decatur UCC, Decatur, Georgia, to worship, elect new officers, hear the report of our team recently returned from the Global Theological Education event which took four of our staff and six of our leaders to Thailand for two and a half weeks to explore interfaith conversations and conflict transformation. The trip was undertaken in collaboration with Lancaster Theological Seminary, which sent six students as well.

Our opening worship, led by Rev. Kathy Burton of Decatur UCC, and musicians of the church invited us to be a church seeking new horizons and engaging the world in mission. Following that Carrole Moss, Barbara Sullivan, Debbie Spearman, Kathy Clark, Sarah Kim, and Tim Downs led a conversation about the challenges and joys of global ministry as they had engaged them in the recent trip to Thailand. They spoke of the ways in which barriers were overcome in conversations with Buddhists and Muslims, movingly described their visit to a refugee camp of 30,000 in Mae Sot, Thailand on the Thai Burma border serving the Karen people who had fled oppression in Burma, and lifted up the fact that through the work of Church World Service we are present in that camp.

Cornelius Watts, member of First Congregational UCC Atlanta, and moderator of the Association called the meeting to order. Treasurer Blair Bonds reported that the Association is carrying a balance of \$21,000. Moderator Watts noted that he was completing his term and was grateful for the growth and vitality that has characterized the life of the churches of the Association. The Nominating Committee reported the following nominations: Elizabeth Clement, Moderator, George Drumbor, Vice-Moderator, Blair Bonds, Treasurer, Ginnie Ferrell, Secretary, and Billy Stone and Cynthia Warren delegates at large.

Conference Minister Tim Downs gave a report on the state of the Conference. He thanks Cornelius for his faithful service as Moderator. He said that while there are many signs of hope, the Conference is facing a season of financial challenges in light of the fact that giving from local churches dropped \$10,000 between 2010 and 2011. We have responded in two ways. Debbie Spearman has been hired to engage in financial development and stewardship consultation with churches, and we have cut expenses dramatically in 2012. We have secured substantial grant funding to strengthen our leadership development efforts through the PATHWAYS Program. He also thanked the Association for its support of the reorganization of the process of discernment, authorization and oversight for ministry. This process has historically resided in the association, and we are now moving to doing this collaboratively at the Conference level. This new way of operating will be introduced over the course of 2012.

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UCC History and Polity	UCC History and Polity

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